

GENERAL ORDERS

No. 74

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, DC, 20 November 1969

AWARD OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR



By direction of the President, under the Joint Resolution of Congress approved 12 July 1862 (amended by act of 3 March 1863, act of 9 July 1918, and act of 25 July 1963), the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty is awarded posthumously by the Department of the Army in the name of Congress to:

Second Lieutenant *Harold B. Durham, Jr.*,
Artillery, United States Army, who distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the cost of his life above and beyond the call of duty on 17 October 1967 while assigned to Battery C, 6th Battalion, 15th Artillery, 1st Infantry Division, in the Republic of Vietnam. On this date, Lieutenant *Durham* was serving as a forward observer with Company D, 2d Battalion, 28th Infantry, during a battalion reconnaissance-in-force mission. At approximately 1015 hours, contact was made with an enemy force concealed in well-camouflaged positions and fortified bunkers. Lieutenant *Durham* immediately moved into an exposed position to adjust the supporting artillery fire onto the insurgents. During a brief lull in the battle he administered emergency first aid to the wounded in spite of heavy enemy sniper fire directed toward him. Moments later, as enemy units assaulted friendly positions, he learned that Company A, bearing the brunt of the attack, had lost its forward observer. While he was moving to replace the wounded observer, the enemy detonated a claymore mine, severely wounding him in the head and impairing his vision. In spite of the intense pain, he continued to direct the supporting artillery fire and to employ his individual weapon in support of the hard-pressed infantrymen. As the enemy pressed their attack, Lieutenant *Durham* called for supporting fire to be placed almost directly on his position. Twice the insurgents were driven back, leaving many dead and wounded behind. Lieutenant *Durham* was then taken to a secondary defensive position. Even in his extremely weakened condition, he continued to call artillery fire onto the enemy. He refused to seek cover and instead positioned himself in a small clearing which afforded a better vantage point from which to adjust the fire. Suddenly, he was severely wounded a second time by enemy machinegun fire. As he lay on the ground near death, he saw two Viet Cong approaching, shooting the defenseless wounded men. With his last effort, Lieutenant *Durham* shouted a warning to a nearby soldier who immediately killed the insurgents. Lieutenant *Durham* died moments later, still grasping the radio handset. Lieutenant *Durham's* gallant actions in close combat with an enemy force are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.



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By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

Official:

KENNETH G. WICKHAM,
Major General, United States Army,
The Adjutant General.

W. C. WESTMORELAND,
General, United States Army,
Chief of Staff.

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